

Picard language

Picard (/ˈpɪkɑːrd/^[3] also US: /pɪˈkɑːrd/, /pɪkərd/^{[4][5]} French: [pikaʁ] (ⓘ) (ⓘ) listen (ⓘ)) is a *langues d'oïl* dialect of the Romance language family spoken in the northernmost part of France and southern Belgium. Administratively, this area is divided between the French *Hauts-de-France* region and the Belgian Wallonia along the border between both countries due to its traditional core being the districts of *Tournai* and *Mons* (Walloon Picardy).

Picard is referred to by different names as residents of Picardy simply call it *Picard*, but it is more commonly known as ***chti*** or ***chtimi*** in the more populated *Nord-Pas-de-Calais* (Romance Flanders around the metropolis of *Lille* and *Douai*, and northeast *Artois* around *Béthune* and *Lens*). It is also named ***Rouchi*** around *Valenciennes*, ***Roubaignot*** around *Roubaix*, or simply *patois* in general.

As of 2008, Picard native speakers amount to 700,000 individuals, the vast majority of which are elderly people (aged 65 and over). Since its daily use had drastically declined, Picard was declared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) a "seriously endangered language".^[6]

Contents
Recognition
Origins
Dialectal variations
Verbs and tenses
Vocabulary
Some phrases
Numerals
Use
Written Picard
Learning Picard
See also
References
Linguistic studies of Picard
External links
Audio

Picard	
<i>picard</i>	
Pronunciation	[pikaʁ]
Native to	France, Belgium
Native speakers	c. 700,000 (2008) ^[1]
Language family	<div>Indo-European<ul style="list-style-type: none">Italic<ul style="list-style-type: none">Romance<ul style="list-style-type: none">Western<ul style="list-style-type: none">Gallo-Romance<ul style="list-style-type: none">Oil<ul style="list-style-type: none">Picard</div>
Official status	
Official language in	None
Recognised minority language in	 Belgium (recognised by the French Community of Belgium)
Regulated by	None
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	pcd
Glottolog	pica1241 (http://glottolog.org/resource/language/id/pica1241) ^[2]
Linguasphere	51-AAA-he

Recognition

Belgium's French Community gave full official recognition to Picard as a regional language along with Walloon, *Gaumais* (Lorraine), Champenois (Champagne) and Lorraine German in its 1990 decree. The French government has not followed suit and has not recognized Picard as an official regional language (in line with its policy of linguistic unity, which allows for only one official language in France), but some reports have recognized Picard as a language distinct from French.

A 1999 report by Bernard Cerquiglini, the director of the *Institut national de la langue française* (National Institute of the French Language) stated:

The gap has continued to widen between French and the varieties of *langues d'oïl*, which today we would call "French dialects"; Franc-comtois, Walloon, Picard, Norman, Gallo, Poitevin, Saintongeais, Bourguignon-morvandiau,

Lorrain must be accepted among the regional languages of France; by placing them on the list [of French regional languages], they will be known from then on as *langues d'oïl*.^[7]

Even if it has no official status as a language in France, Picard, along with all the other languages spoken in France, benefits from actions led by the Culture Minister's General Commission on the French Language and the Languages of France (*la Délégation générale à la langue française et aux langues de France*).

Origins

Picard, like French, is one of the *langues d'oïl* and belongs to the Gallo-Roman family of languages. It consists of all the varieties used for writing (Latin: *scriptae*) in the north of France from before 1000 (in the south of France at that time the Occitan language was used). Often, the *langues d'oïl* are referred to simply as Old French. Picard is phonetically quite different from the North-central *langues d'oïl*, which evolved into modern French. Among the most notable traits, the evolution in Picard towards palatalization is less marked than in the central *langues d'oïl* in which it is particularly striking; /k/ or /g/ before /j/, tonic /i/ and /e/, as well as in front of tonic /a/ and /ɔ/ (from earlier **au*; the open /o/ of the French *porte*) in central Old French but not in Picard:

- Picard *keval* ~ Old French *cheval* (horse; pronounced [tʃeval] rather than the modern [ʃəval]), from **kabal* (vulgar Latin *caballus*): retaining the original /k/ in Picard before tonic /a/ and /ɔ/.
- Picard *gambe* ~ Old French *jambe* (leg; pronounced [dʒambe] rather than the modern [ʒɑ̃b] – [ʒ] is the *ge* sound in *beige*), from **gambe* (vulgar Latin *gamba*): absence of palatalization of /g/ in Picard before tonic /a/ and /ɔ/.
- Picard *kief* ~ Old French *chef* (leader), from **kaf* (Latin *caput*): less palatalization of /k/ in Picard
- Picard *cherf* ~ Old French *cerf* (stag; pronounced [tʃerf] and [tserf] respectively), from **kerf* (Latin *cervus*): simple palatalization in Picard, palatalization then fronting in Old French

The effects of palatalization can be summarised as this:

- /k/ and (tonic) /y/, /i/ or /e/: Picard [tʃ] (written *ch*) ~ Old French [ts] (written *c*)
- /k/ and /g/ + tonic /a/ or /ɔ/: Picard [k] and [g] ~ Old French [tʃ] and [dʒ].

There are striking differences, such as Picard *cachier* ('to hunt') ~ Old French *chacier*, which later took the modern French form of *chasser*. Because of the proximity of Paris to the northernmost regions of France, French (that is, the languages that were spoken in and around Paris) greatly influenced Picard and vice versa. The closeness between Picard and French made the former not always be recognised as a language in its own right, but rather a "distortion of French" as it is often viewed.

Dialectal variations

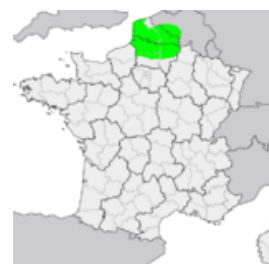
Despite being geographically and syntactically affiliated according to some linguists due to their inter-comprehensible morphosyntactic features, Picard in Picardy, Ch'timi and Rouchi still intrinsically maintain conspicuous discrepancies. Picard includes a variety of very closely related dialects. It is difficult to list them all accurately in the absence of specific studies on the dialectal variations, but these varieties can probably *provisionally* be distinguished: Amiénois, Vimeu-Ponthieu, Vermandois, Thiérache, Beauvaisis, "ch'timi" (Bassin Minier, Lille), dialects in other regions near Lille (Roubaix, Tourcoing, Mouscron, Comines), "rouchi" (Valenciennois) and Tournaisis, Borain, Artésien rural, Boulonnais. The varieties are defined by specific phonetic, morphological and lexical traits and sometimes by a distinctive literary tradition.

The Ch'ti language was re-popularised by the 2008 French comedy film *Welcome to the Sticks* (French: *Bienvenue chez les Ch'tis*; French pronunciation: [bjɛ̃vni ʒe le ʃti]) which broke nearly every box office record in France and earned over \$245,000,000 worldwide on an 11 million euro budget.^[8]

Verbs and tenses



The geographical spread of Picard and Chti among the Oïl languages (other than French) can be seen in shades of green and yellow on this map.



spread of **Picard** (Picard, Ch'ti, Rouchi, etc.)

The first person plural often appears in spoken Picard in the form of the neutral third person *in*; however, the written form prioritizes *os* (as in French, where *on* is used for *nous*). On the other hand, the spelling of conjugated verbs will depend on the pronunciation, which varies within the Picard domain. For instance southern Picard would read *il étoait / étoét* while northern Picard would read *il étot*. This is noted as variants in the following:

TO BE : ète (être)										
Indicative							Subjunctive		Imperative	
	Present	Imperfect		Future	Conditional		Present			
		North	South		North	South		Variables		Variables
I	ej su	j'éto(s)	j'étoé / étoais	ej srai	ej séro(s)	ej sroé	qu'ej soéche	qu'ej fuche / seuche		
YOU	t'es	t'éto(s)	t'étoés / étoais	tu sros	té séros	tu sroés	eq tu soéches	eq tu fuches / seuches	soéche	fus / fuche
HE	il est	i'étot	il étoét / étoait	i sro	i sérot	i sroét	qu'i soéche	qu'i fuche / seuche		
SHE	al est	al étot	al étoét / étoait	ale sro	ale sérot	ale sroét	qu'ale soéche	qu'ale fuche / seuche		
IT	in est	in étot	in étoét / étoait	in sro	in sérot	in sroét	qu'in soéche	qu'in fuche / seuche		
WE	os sonmes	os étonmes	os étoïnmes	os srons	os séronmes	os sroïnmes	qu'os soéïonches	qu'os fuchonches / seuchonches / sonches	soéïons	fuchons
YOU	os êtes	os étotes	os étoêtes	os srez	os sérotés	os sroêtes	qu'os soéïèches	qu'os fuchèches / seuchèches	soéïez	fuchez
THEY	is sont	is étotte	is étoétte / étoaitte	is sront	is sérotte	is sroétte	qu'is soéchtte	qu'is fuchtte / seuchtte		

TO HAVE : avoèr (avoir)										
Indicative							Subjunctive		Imperative	
	Present	Imperfect		Future	Conditional		Present			
		North	South		North	South		Variables		Variables
I	j'ai	j'ai	j'avo(s)	j'avoés / avoais	j'arai	j'érai	j'aros	j'éroé	eq j'euche	
YOU	t'as	t'os	t'avos	t'avoés	t'aras	t'éros	t'aros	t'éroés	eq t'euches	aïe
HE	i'a	il o	i'avot	il avoét	i'ara	il éro	i'arot	il éroét	qu'il euche	
SHE	al a	al o	al avot	al avoét	al ara	al éro	al arot	al éroét	qu'al euche	
IT	in a	in o	in avot	in avoét	in ara	in éro	in arot	in éroét	qu'in euche	
WE	os avons	os avons	os avonmes	os avoinmes	os arons	os érons	os aronmes	os éroïnmes	qu'os euchonches / aïonches	aïons
YOU	os avez	os avez	os avotes	os avoêtes	os arez	os érez	os arotés	os éroêtes	qu'os euchèches / aïèches	aïez
THEY	is ont	il ont	is avotte	is avoétte	is aront	is éront	is arotte	is éroétte	qu'is euhutte	

TO GO : s'in aler (s'en aller)										
Indicative							Subjunctive		Imperative	
	Present	Imperfect		Future	Conditional		Present			
		North	South		North	South		<i>Variables</i>		<i>Variables</i>
I	j'm'in vas	ej m'in vos	j'm'in alos	ej m'in aloés / aloais	j'm'in irai	j'm'in iros	ej m'in iroé	qu'ej m'in ale	qu'ej m'in voaiche	
YOU	té t'in vas	tu t'in vos	té t'in alos	tu t'in aloés	tu t'in iros	té t'in iros	tu t'in iroés	qu'té t'in ale	qu'tu t'in voaiches	
HE	i s'in va	i s'in vo	i s'in alot	i s'in aloét	i s'in iro	i s'in irot	i s'in iroét	qu'i s'in ale	qu'i s'in voaiche	
SHE	ale s'in va	ale s'in vo	ale s'in alot	ale s'in aloét	ale s'in iro	ale s'in irot	ale s'in iroét	qu'ale s'in ale	qu'ale s'in voaiche	
IT	in s'in va	in s'in vo	in s'in alot	in s'in aloét	in s'in ira	in s'in irot	in s'in iroét	qu'in s'in ale	qu'in s'in voaiche	
WE	os nos in alons	os nos in alons	os nos in alonmes	os nos in aloinmes	os nos in irons	os nos in ironmes	os nos in iroinmes	qu'os nos in allotte	qu'os nos in alonches	
YOU	os vos in alez	os vos in alez	os vos in alotes	os vos in aloêtes	vos vos in irez	os vos in irottes	os vos in iroêtes	qu'os vos in allotte	qu'os vos in alèches	
THEY	is s'in vont	is s'in vont	is s'in alotte	is s'in aloétte	is s'in iront	is s'in irotte	is s'in iroétte	qu'is s'in allote	qu'is s'in voaichtte	

Vocabulary

The majority of Picard words derive from Vulgar Latin.

<u>English</u>	<u>Picard</u>	<u>French</u>
English	<i>Inglé</i>	Anglais
Hello!	<i>Bojour ! or Bojour mes gins ! (formal) or Salut ti z'aute ! (informal)</i>	Bonjour (lit.: Bonjour mes gens ! or Salut vous autres !)
Good evening!	<i>Bonsoèr !</i>	Bonsoir
Good night!	<i>La boinne nuit !</i>	Bonne nuit !
Goodbye!	<i>À s'ervir ! or À l'arvoière ! or À t'ervir !</i>	Au revoir !
Have a nice day!	<i>Eune boinne journée !</i>	Bonne journée !
Please/if you please	<i>Sins vos komander (formal) or Sins t' komander (informal)</i>	S'il vous plaît (lit: sans vous commander)
Thank you	<i>Merchi</i>	Merci
I am sorry	<i>Pardon or Échtchusez-mi</i>	Pardon or Excusez-moi
What is your name?	<i>Kmint qu'os vos aplez ?</i>	Comment vous appelez-vous ?
How much?	<i>Combin qu'cha coûte ?</i>	Combien ça coute ?
I do not understand.	<i>Éj n'comprinds poin.</i>	Je ne comprends pas.
Yes, I understand.	<i>Oui, j' comprinds.</i>	Oui, je comprends.
Help!	<i>À la rescousse !</i>	À l'aide (lit.: À la rescousse !)
Can you help me please?	<i>Povez-vos m'aider, sins vos komander ?</i>	Pouvez-vous m'aider, s'il vous plaît ?
Where are the toilets?	<i>D'ousqu'il est ech tchioér ?</i>	Où sont les toilettes ? (<u>Slang</u> : Où sont les chiottes ?)
Do you speak English?	<i>Parlez-vos inglé ?</i>	Parlez-vous anglais ?
I do not speak Picard.	<i>Éj n'pérle poin picard.</i>	Je ne parle pas picard.
I do not know.	<i>Éj n'sais mie.</i>	Je ne sais pas. (lit: Je ne sais <u>mie</u> .)
I know.	<i>Éj sais.</i>	Je sais.
I am thirsty.	<i>J'ai soé. (literally, "I have thirst")</i>	J'ai soif.
I am hungry.	<i>J'ai fan. (literally, "I have hunger")</i>	J'ai faim.
How are you? / How are things going? / How is everything?	<i>Comint qu'i va ? (formal) or Cha va t'i ?</i>	Comment vas-tu ? or Ça va ?
I am fine.	<i>Cha va fin bien.</i>	Ça va bien.
Sugar	<i>Chuque</i>	Sucre
Crybaby	<i>Brayou</i>	Pleurnicheur (lit: brailleur)

Some phrases

Many words are very similar to French, but a large number are totally specific to Picard—principally terms relating to mining or farming.

Here are several typical phrases in Picard, accompanied by French and English translations:

J'ai prins min louchet por mi aler fouir min gardin.

J'ai pris ma bêche pour aller bêcher mon jardin.

"I took my spade to go dig my garden."

Mi, à quate heures, j'archine eune bonne tartine.

Moi, à quatre heures, je mange une bonne tartine.

"At four o'clock, I eat a good snack."

Quind un Ch'ti mi i'est à l'agonie, savez vous bin che qui li rind la vie ? I bot un d'mi. (Les Capenoules (a music group))

Quand un gars du Nord est à l'agonie, savez-vous bien ce qui lui rend la vie ? Il boit un demi.

"When a northerner is dying, do you know what revives him? He drinks a pint."

**Pindant l'briquet un galibot composot, assis sur un bos,
L'air d'eune musique qu'i sifflotot
Ch'étoit tellemint bin fabriqué, qu'les mineurs lâchant leurs briquets
Commînssotent à's'mette à'l'danser (Edmond Tanière - *La polka du mineur*)**

*Pendant le casse-croûte un jeune mineur composa, assis sur un bout de bois
L'air d'une musique qu'il sifflota
C'était tellement bien fait que les mineurs, lâchant leurs casse-croûte
Commencèrent à danser.*

"During lunch a young miner composed, seated on a piece of wood
"The melody of a tune that he whistled
"It was so well done that the miners, leaving their sandwiches,
"Started to dance to it" (Edmond Tanière - *La polka du mineur*, "The Miner's Polka")

I n'faut pas qu'ches glaines is cantent pus fort que ch'co.

Il ne faut pas que les poules chantent plus fort que le coq.

"Hens must not sing louder than the rooster" (n. b. this saying really refers to men and women rather than poultry)

J' m'in vo à chlofe, lo qu'i n'passe poin d'caroche.

Je vais au lit, là où il ne passe pas de carrosse.

"I go to bed where no car is running."

Moqueu d'gins

railleur, persifleur (lit. moqueur des gens)

"someone who mocks or jeers at people" (compare *gens*, which is French for "people")

Ramaseu d'sous

personne âpre au gain (lit. ramasseur de sous)

"a greedy person"

Numerals

Cardinal numbers in Picard from 1 to 20 are as follows:

- One: *un* (m) / *eune* (f)
- Two: *deus*
- Three: *troés*
- Four: *quate*
- Five: *chonc*
- Six: *sis*
- Seven: *sèt*
- Eight: *uit*
- Nine: *neu*
- Ten: *dis*
- Eleven: *onze*
- Twelve: *dousse*
- Thirteen: *trèsse*
- Fourteen: *quatore*
- Fifteen: *tchinse*
- Sixteen: *sèse*
- Seventeen: *dis-sèt*
- Eighteen: *dis-uit*

- Nineteen: *dis-neu*
- Twenty: *vint*

Use



Picard language signage in Cayeux-sur-Mer

Picard is not taught in French schools (apart from a few one-off and isolated courses) and is generally only spoken among friends or family members. It has nevertheless been the object of scholarly research at universities in Lille and Amiens, as well as at Indiana University.^[9] Since people are now able to move around France more easily than in past centuries, the different varieties of Picard are converging and becoming more similar. In its daily use, Picard is tending to lose its distinctive features and may be confused with regional French. At the same time, even though most Northerners can understand Picard today, fewer and fewer are able to speak it, and people who speak Picard as their first language are increasingly rare, particularly under 50.^[10]

The 2008 film *Bienvenue chez les Ch'tis*, starring comedian Dany Boon, deals with Ch'ti language and culture and the perceptions of the region by outsiders.

Written Picard

Today Picard is primarily a spoken language, but in the medieval period, there is a wealth of literary texts in Picard. However, Picard was not able to compete with French and was slowly reduced to the status of a regional language.

A more recent body of Picard literature, written during the last two centuries, also exists. Modern written Picard is generally a transcription of the spoken language. For that reason, words are often spelled in a variety of different ways (in the same way that English and French were before they were standardized).

One system of spelling for Picard words is similar to that of French. It is undoubtedly the easiest for French speakers to understand but can also contribute the stereotype that Picard is only a corruption of French rather than a language in its own right.

Various spelling methods have been proposed since the 1960s to offset the disadvantage and to give Picard a visual identity that is distinct from French. There is now a consensus, at least between universities, in favor of the written form known as **Feller-Carton** (based on the Walloon spelling system, which was developed by Jules Feller, and adapted for Picard by Professor Fernand Carton).

Learning Picard

Picard, although primarily a spoken language, has a body of written literature: poetry, songs ("P'tit quinquin" for example), comic books, etc.

A number of dictionaries and *patois* guides also exist (for French speakers):

- René Debrie, *Le cours de picard pour tous - Eche pikar, bèl é rade (le Picard vite et bien). Parlers de l'Amiénois*. Paris, Omnivox, 1983 (+ 2 cassettes), 208p.
- Alain Dawson, *Le picard de poche*. Paris : Assimil, 2003, 192p.
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- Armel Depoilly (A. D. d'Dérgny), *Contes éd no forni, et pi Ramintuvries* (avec lexique picard-français). Abbeville : Ch'Lanchron, 1998, 150p.
- Jacques Dulphy, *Ches diseux d'achteure : diries 1989*. Amiens : Picardies d'Achteure, 1992, 71p. + cassette
- Gaston Vasseur, *Dictionnaire des parlers picards du Vimeu (Somme), avec index français-picard (par l'équipe de Ch'Lanchron d'Abbeville)*. Fontenay-sous-Bois : SIDES, 1998 (rééd. augmentée), 816p. (11.800 termes)
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See also

- Joret line
- Languages of Europe

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External links

- «Même s'ils sont proches, le picard n'est pas un mauvais français» (<http://www.courrier-picard.fr/region/julie-auger-meme-s-ils-sont-proches-le-picard-ia0b0n457240>) (in French) - an article about Julie Auger's linguistic research on Picard
- The Princess & Picard (<http://www.indiana.edu/~rcapub/v23n1/p16.html>) - an essay about Picard from Indiana University, USA
- Qu'est-ce que le Picard? (<http://www.nordmag.com/culture/patois/patois.htm>) (in French) - history of Picard
- Bienvenue chez les Ch'tis (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1064932/>) (in French)- a comedy about differences between northern and southern France.

Audio

<http://ches.diseux.free.fr/sons/d85.mp3>

<http://ches.diseux.free.fr/diri/dir85.htm>

Centre de Ressources pour la Description de l'Oral - picard (<http://www.language-archives.org/language/pcd>) (CRDO)

Collections de COrpus Oraux Numériques - picard (<http://cocoon.huma-num.fr/exist/crdo/rechercher.xql?langue=Picard>) (COCOON)

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